

a. transmitting a web page to one of the subscriber computers, the web page including a hypertext link corresponding to a chat environment facilitating communication among chat participants, the web page also including an indication of the extent to which the chat participants using the chat environment are compatible with a user of the one of the subscriber computers;

b. receiving a request for the chat environment from the one of the subscriber computers;

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c. causing the chat environment to be generated on the one of the subscriber computers, the chat environment depicted as a chat environment on a display device associated with the one of the subscriber computers when processed by an application program operating on the one of the subscriber computers, the depicted chat environment including an area for chat messages, a plurality of screen images, each one of the plurality of screen images associated with a corresponding one of the chat participants, and a plurality of compatibility indicator sets, each one of the indicator sets associated with a corresponding one of the chat participants; and

d. facilitating the establishment of a connection between the one of the subscriber computers and a chat server such that the one of the subscriber computers is logged onto a chat channel corresponding to the generated chat environment.

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15. A method for facilitating a chat service from a web site, the web site consisting of web pages and executable program routines stored on a server, consisting of web pages and executable program routines stored on a server, the server coupled via a computer network to a plurality of subscriber computers each operated by at least one of the subscribers, the method comprising:

a. transmitting a web page to one of the subscriber computers, the web page including a hypertext link corresponding to a chat environment facilitating communication among chat participants, the web page also including an indication of the extent to which the chat participants using the chat environment are compatible with a user of the one of the subscriber computers;

b. receiving a request for the chat environment from the one of the subscriber computers;

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c. causing the chat environment to be generated on the one of the subscriber computers, the chat environment depicted as a chat environment on a display device associated with the one of the subscriber computers when processed by an application program operating on the one of the subscriber computers, the depicted chat environment including an area for chat messages, a plurality of screen images, each one of the plurality of screen images associated with a corresponding one of the chat participants, and a plurality of compatibility indicator sets, each one of the indicator sets associated with a corresponding one of the chat participants; and

d. facilitating the establishment of a connection between the one of the subscriber computers and a chat server such that the one of the subscriber computers is logged onto a chat channel corresponding to the generated chat environment.
